

GENERAL AGREEMENT ON TARIFFS AND TRADE

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ACP-EEC CONVENTION OF LOMÉ

The following communication, dated 15 June 1981, has been received from the Chairman of the Committee of ACP Ambassadors in Brussels.

I have the honour, on behalf of the ACP Group, to submit this letter concerning the trade provisions of the new Convention signed at Lomé (Togo) on 31 October 1979 between the European Economic Community, its member States and the members of the African, Caribbean and Pacific Group of States. This convention (a copy of which is already in your possession through the submission of the EEC) entered into force on 1 January 1981.

This new convention, which follows on from the first Convention of Lomé, reaffirms the Contracting Parties' desire to pursue the establishment of a new model for economic co-operation in general and trade relations in particular between the developed countries and developing countries between which there is a long historical past of special and privileged relations, the validity and perenniality of which have been explicitly recognized by the General Agreement.

The trade régime established by the new Convention of Lomé essentially embodies the provisions of the earlier Convention and includes certain new areas of co-operation such as agricultural and rural co-operation, a system to deal with ACP mineral exports, etc. and certain improvements in favour of the ACP States in respect of areas such as the safeguard clause.

Taking into account the principles that are set forth in Part IV of the General Agreement with regard to non-reciprocity and their present development needs, the ACP States will not be required to undertake, during the period of validity of the present Convention, in respect of imports of products originating in the EEC, obligations corresponding to the commitments entered into by the EEC in respect of imports of products originating in ACP States. The provisions of the new Lomé Convention, and in particular certain changes made therein, reflect the continuing will of the EEC to contribute to the development efforts of the ACP States in keeping with the aspirations of the international Community towards a more just and more balanced economic order.

The ACP Group remains convinced that the new Convention is consistent with the obligations of the Contracting Parties and complies fully with the objectives that govern and motivate the GATT. It requests, accordingly, that this new Convention be examined in the light of the overall objectives of the General Agreement.

The final format of the text of the new Convention as jointly agreed between the Contracting Parties is now being readied and is shortly to be published, but this would in no way change the provisions relating to trade co-operation.

The ACP Group is ready to co-operate fully in this examination. It asks all its partners in GATT to approach the examination in the same positive spirit and considers that such an approach can in general contribute towards further progress in international economic relations.